

# Medium: yet another social media platform?

A new social media platform seems to be announced on a weekly basis and it can be difficult to work out which are here to stay, and which will quickly fade.

Medium is a free and open social media writing platform. Medium was created by Twitter co-founder Evan Williams in 2012. It offers the same broad accessibility and interaction of information that Twitter provides, but unlike Twitter, there are no character limits. It is designed to make writing easy and take the headaches out of writing on the internet. The entire platform is designed around simplicity. To write content you do not need to know anything about the technical aspects of website design, worry about hosting, servers or domain names. The only thing you need is a web browser, an internet connection and your imagination.

Joining Medium is easy and the site allows fast joining if you already use a registered Twitter, Facebook or Google account. Alternatively, you can use any email account. For those who are used to Twitter, instead of hashtags for articles there are tags, with a limit of five per article. As there are no character limits, your post can be as long or short as you want. Clicking on the encircled+ icon in the left page margin allows the addition of an image, video, embedding of content or the creation of a partition within your text.

The strength of social media is the democracy it brings to individuals. Granted, someone with very few followers is less likely to be 'heard' even if they have a message of great quality. However, with the right hashtag or message to an influential individual, anyone has a chance of being heard. As with Twitter, Medium allows you to follow people and reach out to a network of people. The



articles you write are known as stories, and you can interact with stories through responses and highlight sections of other people's stories. Medium also allows you to create or follow publications, which are collections of curated writers.

Currently, only a few urology journals run blog sections (BJUI Blog, TrendsInMensHealth Blog). The editors or sub-editors have the final say as to which blogs are published on their respective websites. These blog posts often tie in with journal articles and provide an opportunity for community engagement. Medium can bring democracy to this process. However, surgeons do not tend to be early adopters of new media platforms, and there is relatively little content on Medium targeted at urologists.

Medium allows easy creation of content and is free to use. There are multiple ways to interact with creators, as well as simply consume their content. Medium has a rare opportunity to establish itself within communities and expand its user base. However, whether Medium is here to stay will be determined by you.

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